



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **ICE'S ATLANTA DEPORTATION OFFICERS ARRESTED 205 FUGITIVE ALIENS IN 1ST QUARTER OF FY-05**

ATLANTA—The Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Deportation and Removal Office in Atlanta announced today that its officers located and arrested 205 fugitive aliens during the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2005 who were attempting to evade deportation.

The office's Fugitive Alien Team, one of 18 nationwide, covers Georgia, North and South Carolina and the territories of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

ICE Field Office Director John A. Mata, who leads alien detention and removal efforts in the team's area, said, "The 9/11 Commission clearly stressed the need to restore integrity to the nation's immigration system. ICE was specifically created to do this. A key step in the restoration process is to locate, arrest and remove fugitive aliens."

The aliens arrested refused to leave the United States despite the orders of immigration judges and were attempting to hide to avoid deportation. As fugitives, they are eligible to be deported immediately. All of those arrested are placed in detention until they are physically removed from the country.

Many of these fugitives had also been convicted of committing crimes that included sexual battery, child molestation, domestic violence, burglary, and drug trafficking. "These are not the people who you want in your neighborhood, watching your kids, or working next to you," said Mata.

In this first quarter, the teams nationwide have arrested 2,894 fugitives. "We are on pace to arrest 800 fugitives in the Atlanta area," said Mata. In Fiscal Year 2004, Mata's team arrested 565 fugitive aliens. "This is hard work that takes smart thinking, so to be where we are right now is pretty impressive," Mata said. "The teams must constantly sort and re-sort information to apprehend aliens who are doing everything possible to evade detection."

Mata and his team also rely upon local police and sheriff departments.

“The information trail rarely goes cold because the police and deputies are constantly making contact with the public,” Mata said. “In the end, someone has seen, heard of, or met face-to-face with the aliens we’re looking for. And, there’s typically other criminal activity involved, so the local and state law enforcement are just as interested in neutralizing the impact of these fugitives. That’s why our partnerships work so well.”

From March 1, 2003 --when ICE was established as an agency under the Department of Homeland Security-- through Sept. 30, 2003, ICE officers and special agents apprehended 3,409 fugitives with final orders of removal. By comparison, in the comparative period from March 1, 2004 to Sept. 30, 2004, 7,239 fugitive aliens were arrested. This marked a 112 percent increase. In all, 11,063 fugitive aliens were arrested during FY-04.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.*